

January 26, 2001

MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS
**MONTANA MEDICAID/MENTAL HEALTH
SERVICES PLAN NOTICE**

**New Definitions of Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) and
Severe Disabling Mental Illness (SDMI)**

The Department of Public Health and Human Services has adopted new definitions of **serious emotional disturbance** and **severe disabling mental illness** in administrative rules. Providers should begin using the new definitions immediately for the purpose of screening individuals for the Mental Health Services Plan and for determining the medical necessity of services requiring those designations under both Medicaid and the Mental Health Services Plan.

Following is a brief summary of the changes and revisions, with the complete definitions on subsequent pages.

The revised definition of SED includes:

- Eliminating “imminent risk of suicide” and “special education” classification as conditions that establish serious emotional disturbance.
- Criteria that are different for youth under 6 years of age and those who are age 6 through 17:
 - Older youth age 6 through 17
 - Must have one or more listed diagnoses (found in complete definition) with severity specifier of moderate or severe. The list has been revised and some diagnoses previously included are no longer accepted.
 - In addition to one or more of the listed diagnoses, the youth must meet either behavioral criteria or have involvement with another agency.
 - Youth under 6 years of age
 - Must demonstrate severe behavioral abnormality that cannot be attributed to intellectual, sensory, or health factors are results in substantial impairment in functioning.

Changes to the definition of SDMI include:

- Eliminating imminent risk of suicide as a condition that establishes a severe disabling mental illness.
- Requiring a severity specifier of moderate or severe for personality disorders.
- Determining that medication is necessary to control the symptoms of mental illness by a health care professional rather than a physician.

Serious Emotional Disturbance

"Serious emotional disturbance" (SED) means with respect to a youth between the ages of 6 and 17 years that the youth meets the requirements of (a), and either (b) or (c).

- (a) The youth has been determined by a licensed mental health professional as having a mental disorder with a primary diagnosis falling within one of the following DSM-IV (or successor) classifications when applied to the youth's current presentation (current means within the past 12 calendar months unless otherwise specified in the DSM-IV) and the diagnosis has a severity specifier of moderate or severe:
 - (i) childhood schizophrenia (295.10, 295.20, 295.30, 295.60, 295.90);
 - (ii) oppositional defiant disorder (313.81);
 - (iii) autistic disorder (299.00);
 - (iv) pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified (299.80);
 - (v) Asperger's disorder (299.80);
 - (vi) separation anxiety disorder (309.21);
 - (vii) reactive attachment disorder of infancy or early childhood (313.89);
 - (viii) schizo affective disorder (295.70);
 - (ix) mood disorders (296.0x, 296.2x, 296.3x, 296.4x, 296.5x, 296.6x, 296.7, 296.80, 296.89);
 - (x) obsessive-compulsive disorder (300.3);
 - (xi) dysthymic disorder (300.4);
 - (xii) cyclothymic disorder (301.13);
 - (xiii) generalized anxiety disorder (overanxious disorder) (300.02);
 - (xiv) posttraumatic stress disorder (chronic) (309.81);
 - (xv) dissociative identity disorder (300.14);
 - (xvi) sexual and gender identity disorder (302.2, 302.3, 302.4, 302.6, 302.82, 302.83, 302.84, 302.85, 302.89);
 - (xvii) anorexia nervosa (severe) (307.1);
 - (xviii) bulimia nervosa (severe) (307.51);
 - (xix) intermittent explosive disorder (312.34); and
 - (xx) attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (314.00, 314.01, 314.9) when accompanied by at least one of the diagnoses listed above.
- (b) As a result of the youth's diagnosis determined in (a) and for a period of at least 6 months, the youth consistently and persistently demonstrates behavioral abnormality in two or more spheres, to a significant degree, well outside normative developmental expectations, that cannot be attributed to intellectual, sensory, or health factors:
 - (i) has failed to establish or maintain developmentally and culturally appropriate relationships with adult caregivers or authority figures;
 - (ii) has failed to demonstrate or maintain developmentally and culturally appropriate peer relationships;
 - (iii) has failed to demonstrate a developmentally appropriate range and expression of emotion or mood;
 - (iv) has displayed disruptive behavior sufficient to lead to isolation in or from school, home, therapeutic or recreation settings;
 - (v) has displayed behavior that is seriously detrimental to the youth's growth, development, safety or welfare, or to the safety or welfare of others; or

- (vi) has displayed behavior resulting in substantial documented disruption to the family including, but not limited to, adverse impact on the ability of family members to secure or maintain gainful employment.
- (c) In addition to mental health services, the youth demonstrates a need for specialized services from at least one of the following human service systems during the previous six months:
 - (i) education services, due to the diagnosis determined in (a), as evidenced by identification as a child with a disability as defined in 20-7-401(4), MCA with respect to which the youth is currently receiving special education services;
 - (ii) child protective services as evidenced by temporary investigative authority, or temporary or permanent legal custody;
 - (iii) the juvenile correctional system, due to the diagnosis determined in (a), as evidenced by a youth court consent adjustment or consent decree or youth court adjudication; or
 - (iv) current alcohol/drug abuse or addiction services as evidenced by participation in treatment through a state-approved program or with a certified chemical dependency counselor.
- (d) Serious emotional disturbance (SED) with respect to a youth under six years of age means the youth exhibits a severe behavioral abnormality that cannot be attributed to intellectual, sensory, or health factors and that results in substantial impairment in functioning for a period of at least 6 months or is predicted to continue for a period of at least 6 months, as manifested by one or more of the following:
 - (i) atypical, disruptive or dangerous behavior which is aggressive or self-injurious;
 - (ii) atypical emotional responses which interfere with the child's functioning, such as an inability to communicate emotional needs and to tolerate normal frustrations;
 - (iii) atypical thinking patterns which, considering age and developmental expectations, are bizarre, violent or hypersexual;
 - (iv) lack of positive interests in adults and peers or a failure to initiate or respond to most social interaction;
 - (v) indiscriminate sociability (e.g., excessive familiarity with strangers) that results in a risk of personal safety of the child; or
 - (vi) inappropriate and extreme fearfulness or other distress which does not respond to comfort by caregivers.

Severe Disabling Mental Illness

"Severe disabling mental illness" means with respect to a person who is 18 or more years of age that the person:

- (a) has been hospitalized at least 30 consecutive days because of a mental disorder at Montana state hospital (Warm Springs campus) at least once;
- (b) has a DSM-IV diagnosis of
 - (i) schizophrenic disorder (295);
 - (ii) other psychotic disorder (295.40, 295.70, 297.1, 297.3, 298.9, 293.81, 293.82);
 - (iii) mood disorder (296.2x, 296.3x, 296.40, 296.4x, 296.5x, 296.6x, 296.7, 296.80, 296.89, 296.90, 301.13, 293.83);
 - (iv) amnestic disorder (294.0, 294.8);
 - (v) disorder due to a general medical condition (310.1); or
 - (vi) pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified (299.80) when not accompanied by mental retardation; or
- (c) has a DSM-IV diagnosis with a severity specifier of moderate or severe of personality disorder (301.00, 301.20, 301.22, 301.4, 301.50, 301.6, 301.81, 301.82, 301.83, or 301.90) which causes the person to be unable to work competitively on a full-time basis or to be unable to maintain a residence without assistance and support by family or a public agency for a period of at least 6 months (or for an obviously predictable period over 6 months); and
- (d) has ongoing functioning difficulties because of the mental illness for a period of at least 6 months (or for an obviously predictable period over 6 months), as indicated by one of the following:
 - (i) health care professional has determined that medication is necessary to control the symptoms of mental illness;
 - (ii) the person is unemployed or does not work in a full-time competitive situation because of mental illness;
 - (iii) the person receives SSI or SSDI payments due to mental illness; or
 - (iv) the person maintains or could maintain a living arrangement only with the ongoing supervision and assistance of family or a public agency.

If you have any questions about these policy changes, please contact Lou Thompson, Mental Health Services Bureau, at (406) 444-0168.